

(12) UK Patent Application (19) GB (11) 2 321 718 (13) A

(43) Date of A' Publication 05.08.1998

(21) Application No 9702079.6

(22) Date of Filing 31.01.1997

(71) Applicant(s)

National Science Council
(Incorporated in Taiwan)
18F1, No 106, Section 2, Ho-Ping E Road, Taipei 106,
Taiwan

(72) Inventor(s)

Bau-Jy Liang
Shu-Hsia Chen
Chung-Kuang Wei

(74) Agent and/or Address for Service

Withers & Rogers
4 Dyer's Buildings, Holborn, LONDON, EC1N 2JT,
United Kingdom

(51) INT CL⁶

G02F 1/1339 1/1333

(52) UK CL (Edition P)

G2F FCD F23E F24T F25F

(56) Documents Cited

GB 1434509 A	EP 0649046 A	EP 0640863 A
EP 0636917 A	EP 0568355 A	EP 0278721 A
US 5589964 A	US 5274481 A	US 4850681 A
US 4295712 A		

(58) Field of Search

UK CL (Edition O) G2F FCD
INT CL⁶ G02F 1/1333 1/1339
ONLINE: EDOC WPIN JAPIO

(54) Abstract Title

Liquid crystal display

(57) A closed-cavity liquid-crystal display is provided, which is a liquid-crystal display having a wide angle of view. The liquid-crystal display comprises: an insulator layer (100) formed with a plurality of cavities, in which liquid-crystal material (9) is filled into the plurality of cavities; a first substrate (10), placed on one side of the insulator layer (100), in which a first electrode (13) is formed on one side of the first substrate (10) near the insulator layer (100), and a second substrate (20), placed on the other side of the insulator layer (100), in which a second electrode (23) is formed on one side of the second substrate (20) near the insulator layer (100), so that the first electrode (13) and the second electrode (23) are used to drive and vary the alignment of liquid-crystal molecules in the plurality of cavities. The closed cavity can be a circular, elliptical, rectangular, hexagonal or multilateral conical, trough-like or cylindrical cavity. The inner circumference of the closed cavity is coated with a homeotropic alignment agent (6, 7, 8), so that the alignment of the liquid-crystal molecules is circularly symmetric, and the optical performance of the liquid-crystal display is independent of the azimuthal angle.

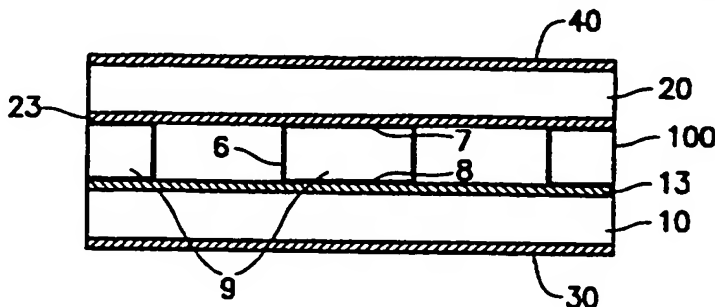


FIG. 2a

GB 2 321 718 A

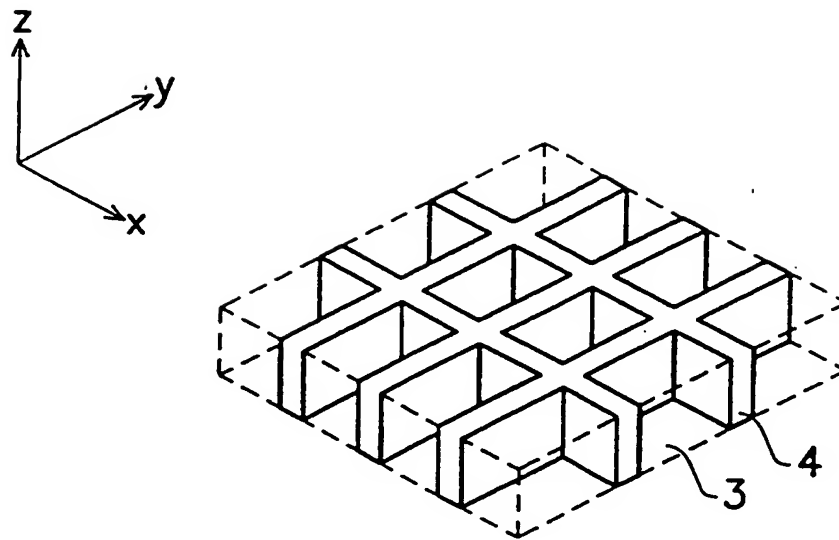


FIG. 1c

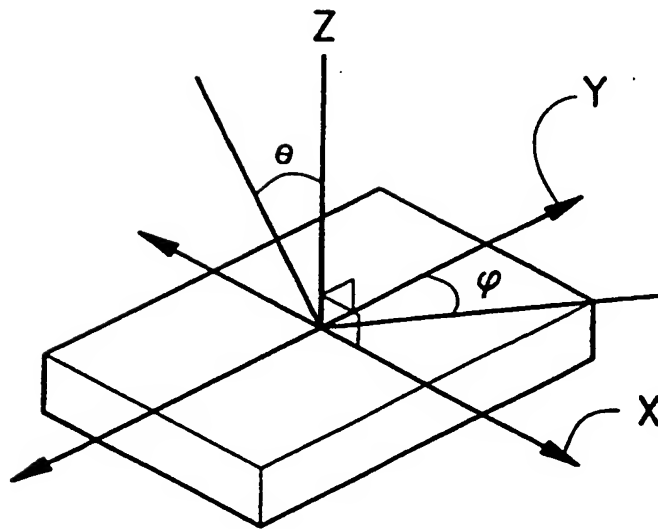


FIG. 1d

4/116

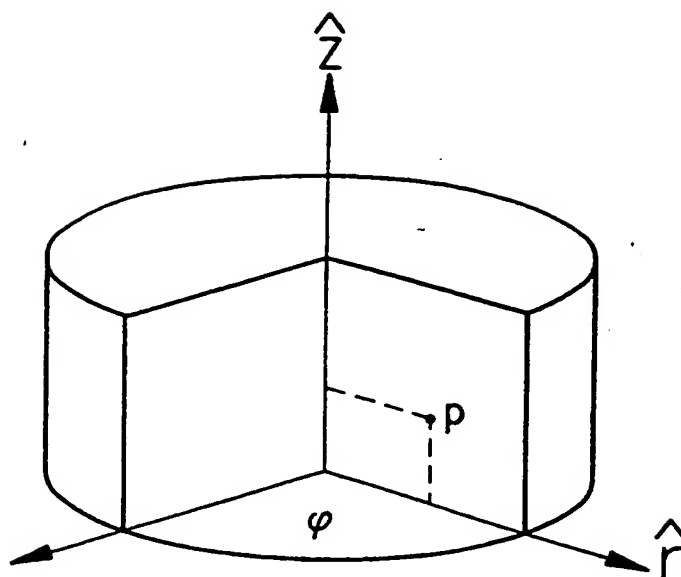


FIG. 2c

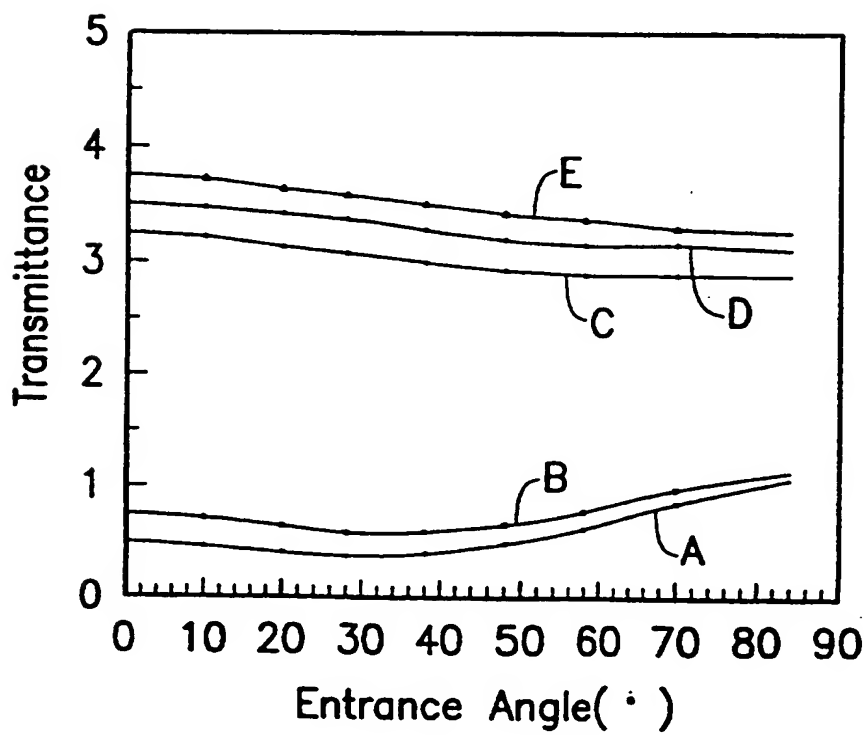


FIG. 2h

6/16

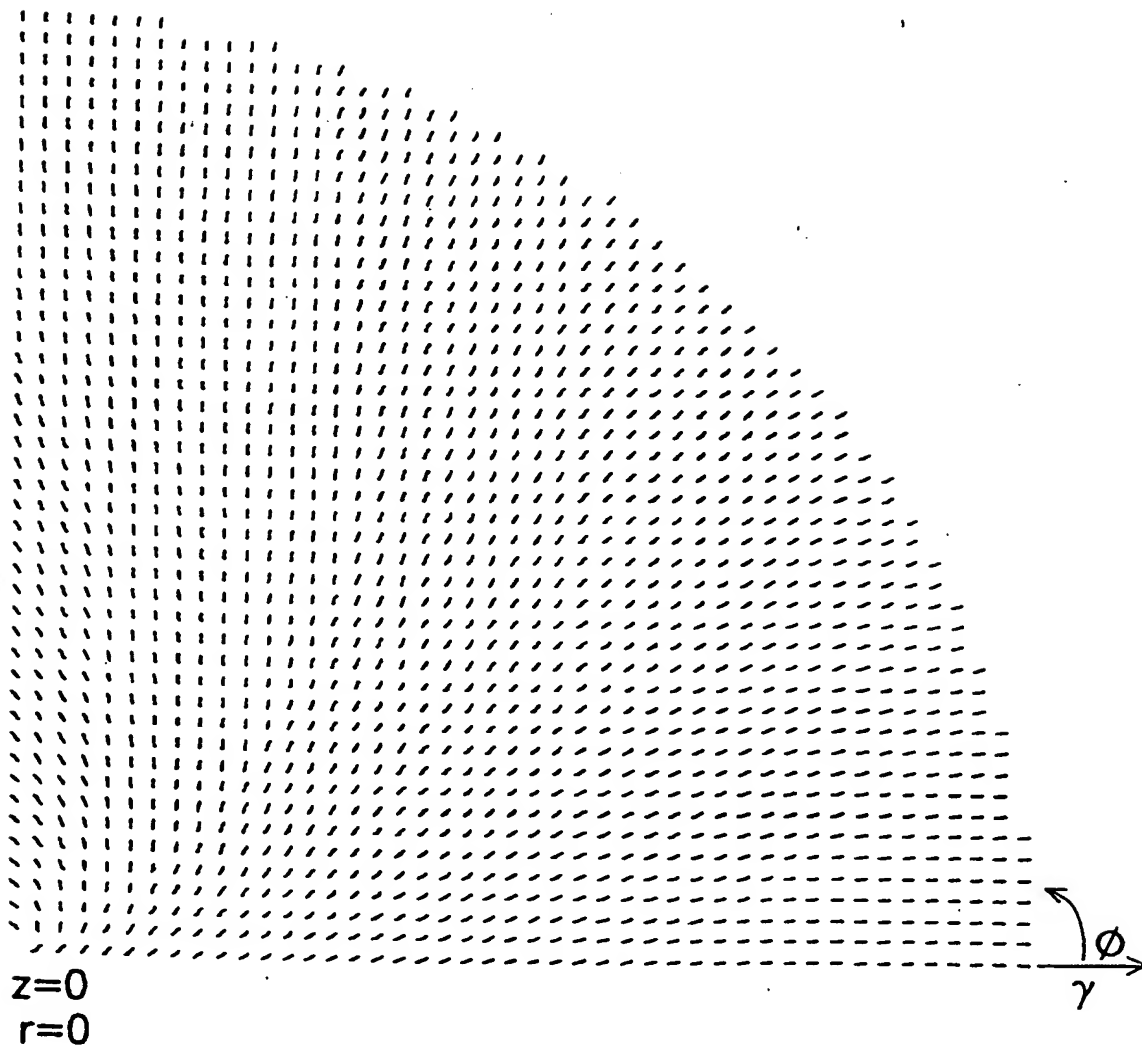


FIG. 2f

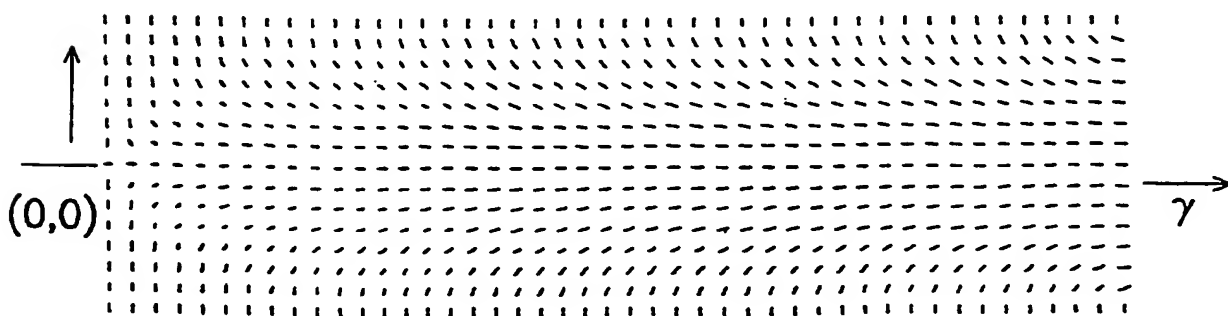


FIG. 2g

8/16

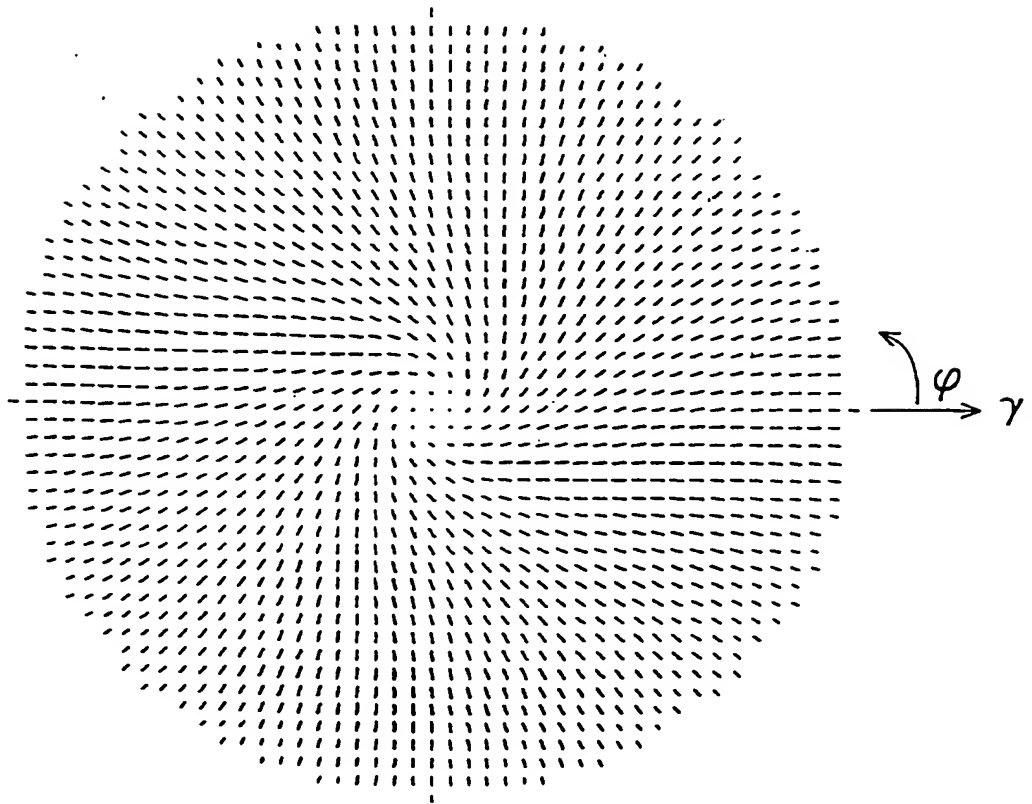


FIG. 3c

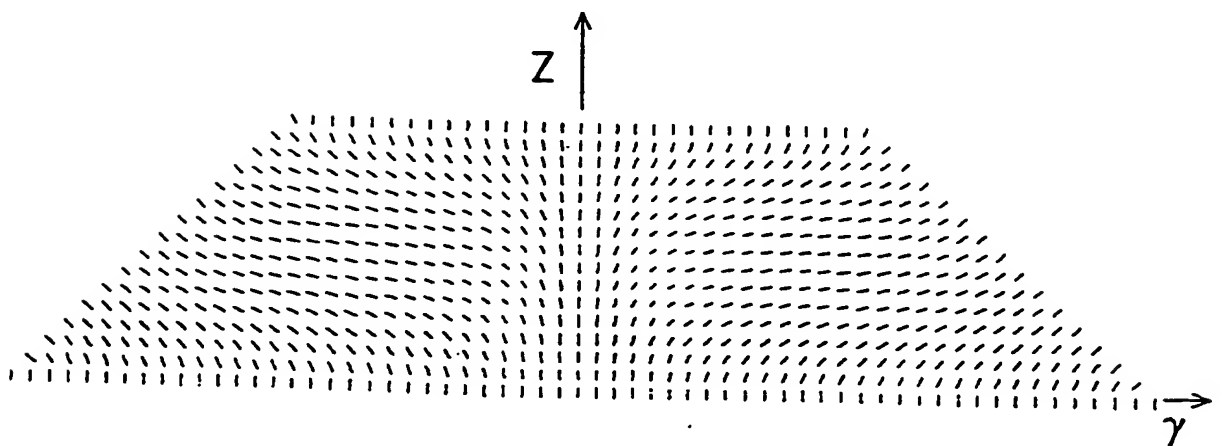


FIG. 3d

10/16

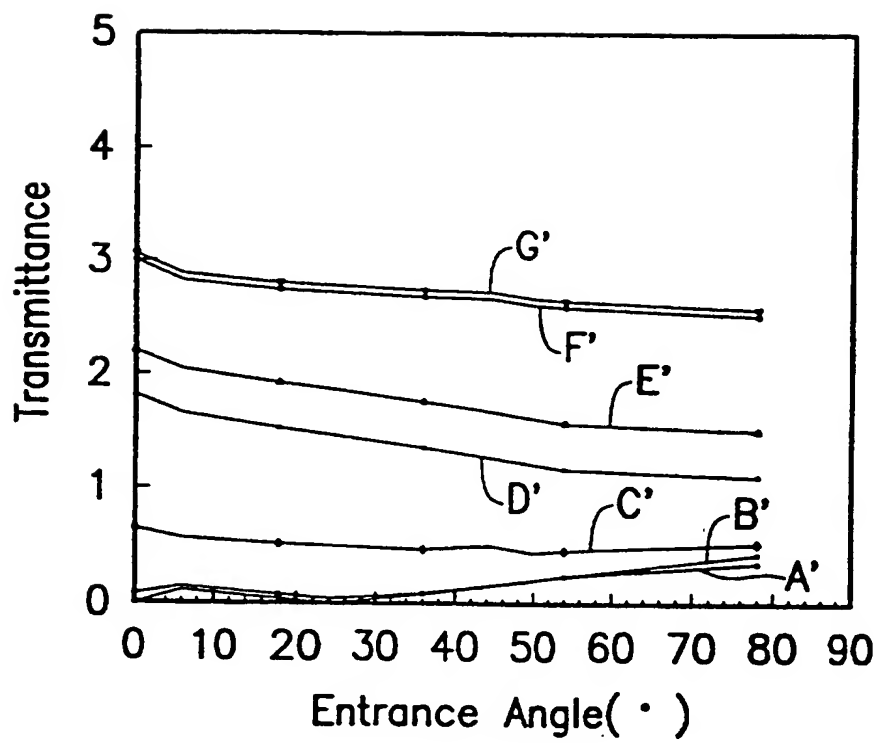


FIG. 3g

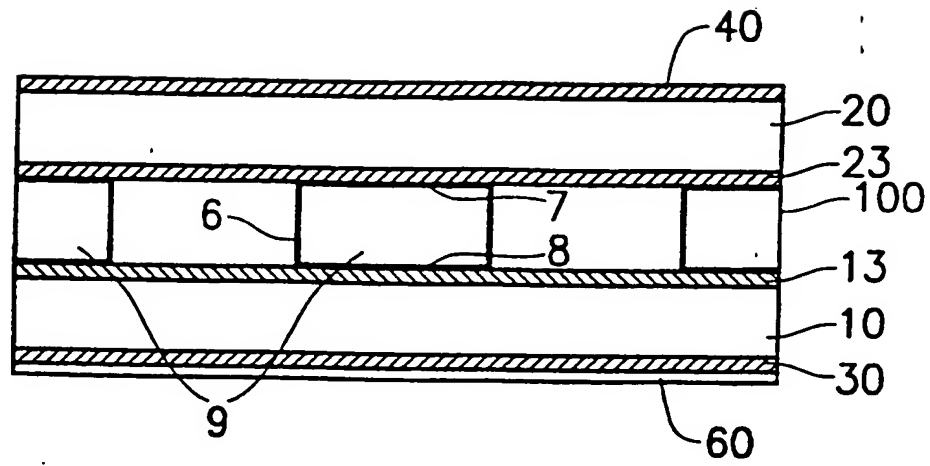


FIG. 5a

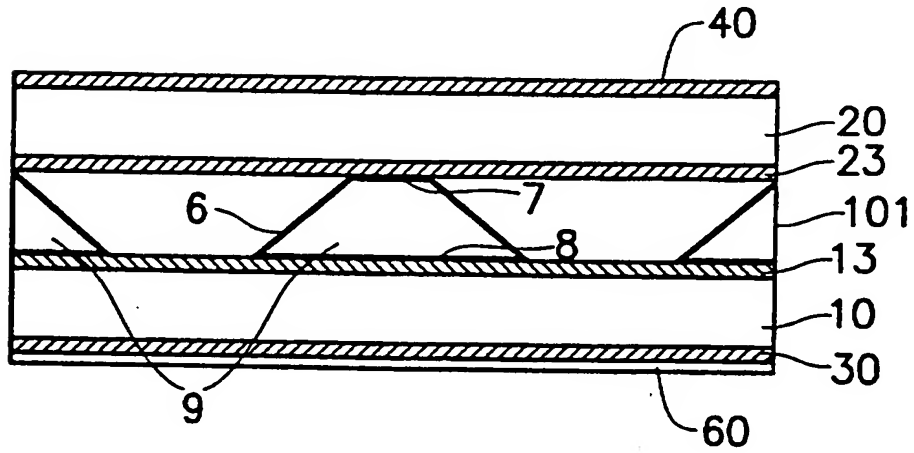


FIG. 5b

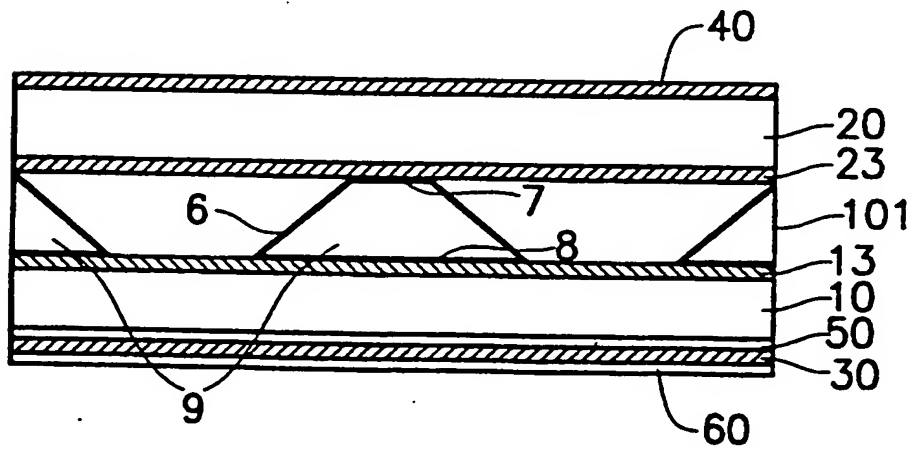


FIG. 5c

14/16

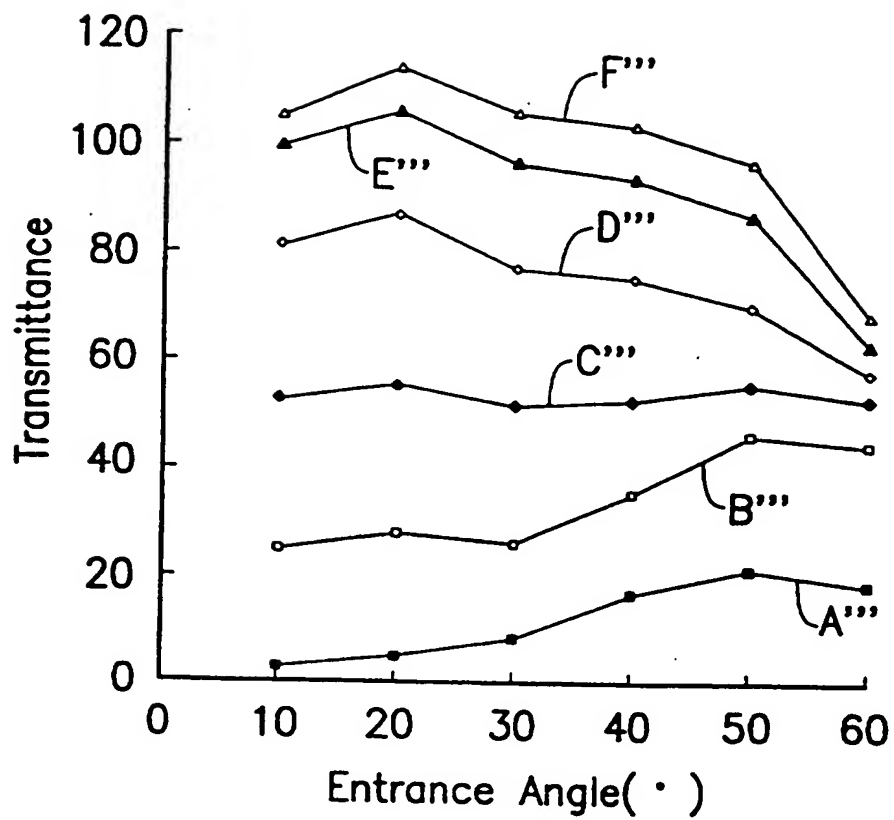


FIG. 6c

16/16

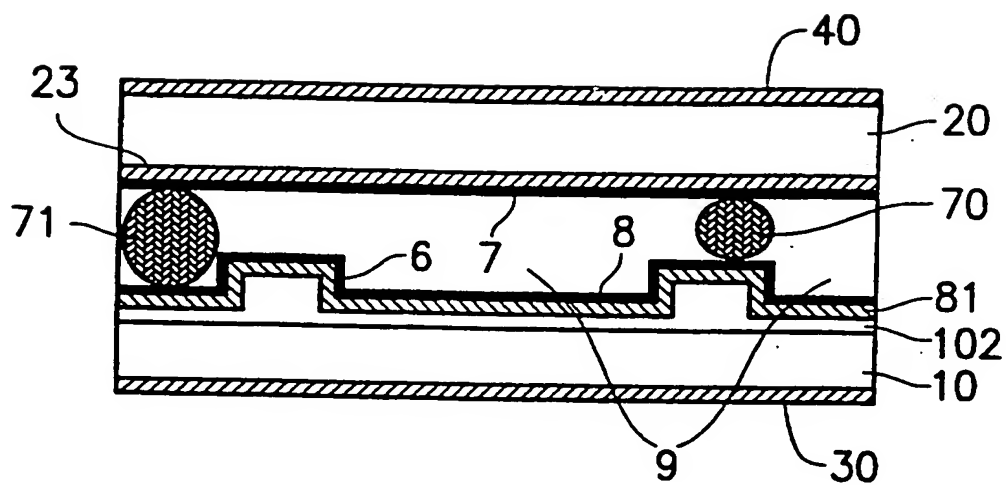


FIG. 8a

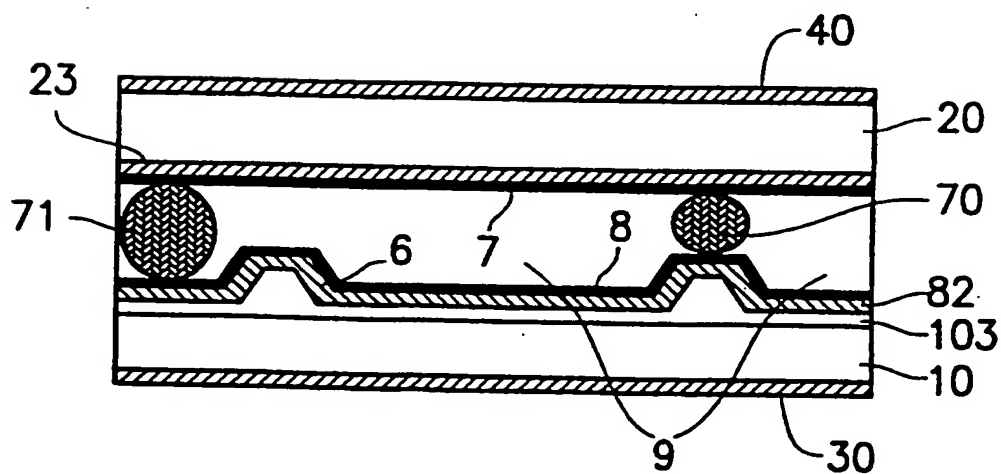


FIG. 8b

voltage exists, the tilt angles of the liquid-crystal molecules in the two domains are ϕ and $-\phi$, respectively. When the light is incident at **a** with a tilt angle θ , the effective refractive index of the liquid-crystal is $n_{//}$. When the light is incident at **b** with the tilt angle θ , the effective refractive index of the liquid-crystal is n_{\perp} . When the light is incident at **a'** with a tilt angle $-\theta$, the effective refractive index of the liquid-crystal is n_{\perp} . When the light is incident at **b'** with the tilt angle $-\theta$, the effective refractive index of the liquid-crystal is $n_{//}$. Therefore, the averaged intensity of the light incident with the angle θ is the same as that of the light incident with the angle $-\theta$. That is, the contrast ratios are the same at both the tilt angle θ and the tilt angle $-\theta$. Thus, the viewing angle is broadened. However, while fabricating such multi-domain liquid-crystal displays, a photolithography process has to be used to divide the multiple domains. Each domain needs to be treated by rubbing along a different direction. However, this rubbing process introduces impurities in the LCD cells and deteriorates the property of the LCD. The static electricity produced by rubbing the substrate tends to damage such devices as thin-film transistors, and thereby lower the yield.

15

Another known prior art is the axially symmetric aligned microcell (hereinafter referred to as ASM), which is disclosed in "Axially Symmetric Aligned Microcell (ASM) Mode: Electro-Optical Characteristics of New Display Mode with Excellent Wide Viewing Angle" by N. Yamada, Sokohzaki, F. Funada, K. Awane, in SID 95' Digest, p.575. The viewing angle without gray scale reverse is about $\pm 60^\circ$ for an ASM liquid-crystal display. Refer to Fig. 1c, which illustrates the structure of an ASM liquid-crystal display. The fabrication of the ASM liquid-crystal display is accomplished by making the polymer 4 separate the liquid-crystal 3 into each pixel according to the phase separation of the polymer and the liquid-crystal. As shown in Fig. 1d, a set of polarizers whose transmitting axes are the X-axis and the Y-axis, respectively, are used to measure the contrast ratio at each viewing angle. As a result, the viewing angle θ is only 40° when the azimuthal angle ω is 45° , 135° , 225° or 315° . Furthermore, it is difficult to fabricate an ASM liquid-crystal display since the upper electrode and the lower electrode thereof must be precisely aligned to make the liquid-crystal able to separate to each pixel.

30

Fig. 1c is a diagram illustrating the structure of an ASM liquid-crystal display;

Fig. 1d is a diagram illustrating the coordinate to define the viewing angle;

5 Fig. 2a is a cross-sectional diagram illustrating a preferred embodiment of CCLC according to the present invention;

10 Fig. 2b is a diagram illustrating the structure of the preferred embodiment of Fig. 2a;

Fig. 2c is a cross-sectional diagram illustrating the geometric structure of a CCLC of Fig. 2a;

15 Fig. 2d is a diagram illustrating the distribution of the liquid-crystal molecules along the ϕ -axis in the CCLC of Fig. 2a while the bias voltage is 2.7 volts;

Fig. 2e is a diagram illustrating the distribution of the liquid-crystal molecules along the z-axis in the CCLC of Fig. 2a while the bias voltage is 2.7 volts;

20 Fig. 2f is a diagram illustrating the distribution of the liquid-crystal molecules along the ϕ -axis in the CCLC of Fig. 2a while the bias voltage is 5.4 volts;

25 Fig. 2g is a diagram illustrating the distribution of the liquid-crystal molecules along the z-axis in the CCLC of Fig. 2a while the bias voltage is 5.4 volts;

Fig. 2h is a diagram illustrating the relation between transmission and entrance angle of CCLC of Fig. 2a at different bias voltages;

30 Fig. 3a is a cross-sectional diagram illustrating another preferred embodiment of CCLC according to the present invention;

Fig. 5b is a cross-sectional diagram illustrating another preferred embodiment using the CCLC according to the present invention;

Fig. 5c is a cross-sectional diagram illustrating another preferred embodiment using
5 the CCLC according to the present invention;

Figs. 6a and 6b are cross-sectional diagrams illustrating another preferred embodiment using the CCLC according to the present invention;

10 Fig. 6c is a diagram illustrating the relation between transmission and entrance angle of CCLC of Fig. 6a at different bias voltages;

Figs. 7a and 7b are cross-sectional diagrams illustrating another preferred embodiment using the CCLC according to the present invention; and

15

Figs. 8a and 8b are cross-sectional diagrams illustrating another preferred embodiment using the CCLC according to the present invention.

The same reference number is used to indicate the same component or device.
20

Many different variations for the closed-cavity liquid-crystal display of the present invention can be made depending on the shape of the cavity, the polarizer and reflector positions, the number of phase compensators, the alignment of liquid-crystal molecules and the dielectric constant of anisotropic liquid-crystal. Some examples are given below.

25

PREFERRED EMBODIMENT 1

Referring to Fig. 2a, the CCLC display device of the present invention comprises: an insulator layer 100, on which a plurality of cylindrical cavities 9 filled with liquid-crystal are formed; a first substrate 10, positioned on one side of the insulator layer 100, and
30 provided with a transparent electrode 13 on one side thereof near the insulator layer 100; and a second substrate 20, positioned on another side of the insulator layer 100, and

(LPCVD), or metal-organic chemical-vapor deposition (MOCVD) can also be used to form an insulator layer. The etching process can be dry etching or wet etching in step (3). The shape of the cavity can be circular, elliptical, rectangular, hexagonal or multilateral, and the cavity can be a pillared cavity or a conical cavity. Moreover, the alignment layer coated on the first substrate, the second substrate and the inner circumference of the cavities can be the same alignment agent or different alignment agent. In the preferred embodiment above, the homeotropic alignment agent DMOAP is used, and negative ($\Delta\epsilon < 0$) nematic liquid-crystal material is filled in the cavities in step (5). Therefore, the alignment of the liquid-crystal molecules is consecutively vertical to the boundary except for the singular ring.

Referring to Fig. 2c, which illustrates a cross-sectional view of a cylindrical CCLC structure and the coordinates, since the cavity is symmetric to the z-axis and the liquid-crystal material is homeotropic to the circumference, the alignment of the liquid-crystal in the cavity is circularly symmetric. Referring to Figs. 2d and 2e, which illustrates the alignment of the liquid-crystal molecules in the cylindrical cavity while the bias voltage is 2.7 volts in this embodiment, wherein Fig. 2d shows the alignment of the liquid-crystal molecules in the first section of (γ, ϕ) plane at $z = 0$, and Fig. 2e shows the alignment of the liquid-crystal molecules in (γ, z) plane, it is noted that singular points exist at $\gamma = 0$ and $z = 0$, and all of the liquid-crystal molecules are located in the (γ, z) plane without a ϕ component.

Referring to Figs. 2f and 2g, while the bias voltage is 5.4 volts, the liquid-crystal molecules are located in the (γ, z) plane with a ϕ component, that is, the alignment of the liquid-crystal molecules is twisted. However, the alignment is still circularly symmetric to the z-axis. In other words, the alignment of the liquid-crystal molecules is a function of (γ, z) . The light passing through the closed cavity is therefore circularly symmetric. Accordingly, the viewing angle is independent of the azimuthal angle. Moreover, the viewing angle can be enlarged since the liquid-crystal molecules are symmetric to the plane where $z=0$. Referring to Fig. 2h, which illustrates the relation between the viewing angle and the transmittance, Curve A represents that no voltage is applied, Curve B represents

where $\gamma = 0$. Furthermore, a singular ring exists at the position where the obtuse angle of the conical cavity is formed. However, since the liquid-crystal molecules are still symmetric to the z-axis, the viewing angle for a conical cavity is independent of the azimuthal angle in this embodiment.

5

Refer to Fig. 3g, which illustrates the relation between the entrance angle and the transmittance. Curve A' represents that no voltage is applied, Curve B' represents a bias voltage of 2.0 volts, Curve C' represents a bias voltage of 3.0 volts, Curve D' represents a bias voltage of 4.0 volts, Curve E' represents a bias voltage of 4.8 volts, Curve F' represents a bias voltage of 9.0 volts, and Curve G' represents a bias voltage of 10.0 volts. The transmittance has a little dependence on the varied entrance angle θ . The curves corresponding to different bias voltages have no intersection. Thus, the range of the viewing angle without gray scale reverse can be increased.

15 PREFERRED EMBODIMENT 3

Refer to Fig. 4a, which illustrates the cross view of the third preferred embodiment according to the present invention. The CCLC display of this embodiment has a similar construction to the second embodiment, except that a further phase compensator 50 is placed between the first substrate 10 and the first linear polarizer 30 to raise the contrast ratio of the CCLC display of this invention. Refer to Fig. 4b, the parallel refractive index $n_{//}$ is larger than the perpendicular refractive index n_{\perp} in the index ellipsoid. The optical anisotropy causes the CCLC displays in the first and second embodiments of this invention having a transmittance which increases as the viewing angle increasing while the bias voltage is 0 volt. As shown by the curve A'' in Fig. 4d, the contrast ratio is gradually deteriorated as the viewing angle increasing. To improve the contrast ratio of the CCLC display of this invention and to cancel the dependency of the transmittance on the viewing angle while the bias voltage is 0 volt, a negative phase compensator 50, in which the parallel refractive index $n_{//}$ is less than the perpendicular refractive index n_{\perp} in the index ellipsoid as shown in Fig. 4c, can be provided on the first substrate 10. After the compensator is provided, the relation between the transmittance and the viewing angle is represented by curve B'' of Fig. 4d.

and 71, which can be made of plastic sphere, glass fiber or the same material as that of the insulator layer 102 or 103. Moreover, as shown in Figs. 8a and 8b, the transparent electrodes 81 and 82 can be coated on the top surface of the insulator layers 102 and 103, respectively. Furthermore, the liquid crystal material used in the above embodiments may
5 includes chiral dopant provided with optical rotation or dye..

The method for fabricating CCLC displays according to the above embodiments is similar. However, the method for patterning the insulator layer to form a plurality of cavities, in addition to photolithography, can be printing, pattern transfer, or phase
10 separation. Moreover, the compensator used in the above embodiments can be made of optically uniaxial materials with a negative birefringence, two biaxial birefringent materials whose optical axes are perpendicular to each other, or materials comprising twisted uniaxial layers.

11. The liquid-crystal display as claimed in claim 5, wherein the compensator is made of optically uniaxial materials with a negative birefringence.
12. The liquid-crystal display as claimed in claim 4, wherein the compensator is made of two biaxial birefringent materials whose optical axes are perpendicular to each other.
- 5 13. The liquid-crystal display as claimed in claim 5, wherein the compensator is made of two birefringent materials whose optical axes are perpendicular to each other.
14. The liquid-crystal display as claimed in claim 4, wherein the compensator is made of materials comprising twisted uniaxial layers.
15. The liquid-crystal display as claimed in claim 5, wherein the compensator is made of
10 materials comprising twisted uniaxial layers.
16. The liquid-crystal display as claimed in claim 1, wherein the insulator layer includes one of oxide, nitride and a combination of oxide and nitride.
17. The liquid-crystal display as claimed in claim 1, wherein the insulator layer can be made of polymer material.
- 15 18. The liquid-crystal display as claimed in claim 1, wherein the plurality of cavities formed in the insulator layer are cylindrical cavities.
19. The liquid-crystal display as claimed in claim 1, wherein the plurality of cavities formed in the insulator layer are conical cavities.
20. The liquid-crystal display as claimed in claim 1, wherein the plurality of cavities formed
20 in the insulator layer are trough cavities.
21. The liquid-crystal display as claimed in claim 1, wherein the liquid-crystal material filled in the plurality of cavities comprises chiral dopant provided with optical rotation.
22. The liquid-crystal display as claimed in claim 1, wherein the liquid-crystal material filled in the plurality of cavities comprises dye.
- 25 23. The liquid-crystal display as claimed in claim 1, wherein the molecules of the liquid-crystal material filled in the plurality of cavities can be in homeotropic, homogeneous or inclined alignment.
24. A fabrication method for a closed cavity of liquid-crystal display, comprising the steps of:
30 (i) forming a first electrode on a first substrate, and forming an insulator layer on one side of the first electrode;

(vi) filling liquid-crystal material into the cell to form a plurality of closed cavities filled with the liquid-crystal material.

31. The fabrication method as claimed in claim 30, further comprising the step of: placing a first polarizer on the other side of the first substrate, and placing a second polarizer on
5 the other side of the second substrate.

32. The fabrication method as claimed in claim 31, further comprising the step of: placing a compensator between the first substrate and the first polarizer.

33. The fabrication method as claimed in claim 30, further comprising the step of: forming a reflector on the first substrate before the formation of the first electrode, and then
10 forming the first electrode on the reflector.

34. The fabrication method as claimed in claim 33, further comprising the step of: placing a second polarizer on the other side of the second substrate.

35. A fabrication method for a closed cavity of liquid-crystal display, comprising the steps of:

15 (i) forming an insulator layer on a first substrate, and forming a plurality of cavities in the insulator layer;

(ii) forming a first electrode on one side of the insulator layer and the circumference of the plurality of cavities formed in the insulator layer;

(iii) forming a second electrode on one side of a second substrate;

20 (iv) coating an alignment layer on the first substrate, the second substrate and the inner circumference of the plurality of cavities formed in the insulator layer;

(v) spraying spacers on the surface of the second electrode on the second substrate, placing the first substrate on the second substrate with the first electrode and the second electrode inside, and partially sealing the edge to form a cell; and

25 (vi) filling liquid-crystal material into the cell to form a plurality of closed cavities filled with the liquid-crystal material.

36. The fabrication method as claimed in claim 35, further comprising the step of: placing a first polarizer on the other side of the first substrate, and placing a second polarizer on the other side of the second substrate.

30 37. The fabrication method as claimed in claim 36, further comprising the step of: placing a compensator between the first substrate and the first polarizer.



Application No: GB 9702079.6
Claims searched: 1 to 29

Examiner: Mr.G.M Pitchman
Date of search: 8 April 1997

Patents Act 1977
Search Report under Section 17

Databases searched:

UK Patent Office collections, including GB, EP, WO & US patent specifications, in:

UK CI (Ed.O): G2F (FCD)

Int CI (Ed.6): G02F 1/1333 1/1339

Other: ONLINE: EDOC WPI JAPIO

Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Identity of document and relevant passage		Relevant to claims
X	GB 1434509	(HUGHES AIRCRAFT)-see figure 3 and page 3 lines 18 to 74	1-17, 24-29
X	EP 0649046 A2	(SHARP)-see figure 9 and abstract	1-18
X	EP 0640863 A2	(MATSUSHITA)-see figure 1 and abstract	1-18
X	EP 0636917 A1	(SHARP)-see figure 7	1-17, 20
X	EP 0568355 A2	(SHARP)-see abstract and figure 2B	1-18
X	EP 0278721 A2	(IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES)-see the figure, column 3 line 58 to column 4 line 5	1-17, 24-29
X	US 5589964	(CANON)-see abstract and figures 5 and 6	1-17
X	US 5274481	(SAMSUNG)-see figure 3A and column lines 25 to 28	1-17, 24-29
X	US 4850681	(CANON)-see figure 1	1-17, 20
X	US 4295712	(CANON)-see figure 2	1-17, 20

X Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step
Y Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of same category.
& Member of the same patent family

A Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
P Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of this invention.
E Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.